

# THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE WEEKLY UPDATE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DNC COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

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This week, the Bureau of Labor Statistics released its report on the latest job numbers, highlighting continued job growth. Throughout the week, the Administration continued its ongoing response to the oil spill, emphasizing the need to clean up and contain the environmental effects of the current disaster, prevent future catastrophes like this one, and ensure the Gulf Coast workers and families affected by the spill are given the support they need. Also this week, President Obama traveled to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to outline the Administration's efforts to build a new foundation for American prosperity. In addition, the President honored fallen soldiers at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elmwood, Illinois on Memorial Day and recognized the contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans at the start of LGBT Pride Month.

## What's Happening?

**Continued Job Growth:** On Friday, the Bureau of Labor Statistics released its latest jobs report, highlighting continued job growth for a fifth consecutive month in May. According to the Bureau's report, the economy added hundreds of thousands of jobs last month, including 41,000 private sector jobs. As a result of those additional jobs, the unemployment rate dropped to 9.7 percent in May. In response to the good news, President Obama said:

"Today, we learned that the economy added 431,000 jobs last month, which means we are again moving in the right direction. The economic policies we put in place are working. An economy that was shrinking at an alarming rate in January of 2009 has now been growing for three consecutive quarters. After losing an average of 750,000 jobs a month during the winter of last year, we have now added jobs for six out of the last seven months. While we recognize that our recovery is in its early stages, and that there will be ups and downs in the months ahead, this report is a sign that our economy is getting stronger by the day."

**Ongoing Response to the Oil Spill:** On Tuesday, President Obama met with the co-chairs of the BP Oil Spill Commission, which is charged with investigating the causes of the disaster in the Gulf to determine what went wrong and how the United States can prevent a similar catastrophe from occurring ever again. President Obama lent his full support to the Commission's investigation, saying:

"We have an obligation to investigate what went wrong and to determine what reforms are needed so that we never have to experience a crisis like this again. If the laws on our books are insufficient to prevent such a spill, the laws must change. If oversight was inadequate to enforce these laws, oversight has to be reformed. If our laws were broken, leading to this death and destruction, my solemn pledge is that we will bring those responsible to justice on behalf of the victims of this catastrophe and the people of the Gulf region."



Also this week, the Administration continued its ongoing efforts to clean up the spill and contain environmental damage in the Gulf Coast region - directing more than 20,000 federal personnel and 17,000 National Guard members in those efforts. In addition, the President planned a third trip to the Gulf Coast area this Friday and is working to ensure that all those whose lives and livelihoods have been affected by the spill are given the support they need. To that end, the Administration on Thursday sent BP a bill for \$69 million to cover the costs of the spill to date.

**A New Economic Foundation:** On Wednesday, President Obama traveled to Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he delivered remarks highlighting the Administration's recovery efforts to date - efforts that have helped to turn the economy around and stimulate new economic growth and job creation. While the President noted the short-term imperative of continued job growth, he also highlighted the necessity of taking steps to ensure the long-term prosperity of the American people. In his remarks, the President said:

"We cannot afford to stand pat while the world races by. The United States of America did not become the most prosperous nation on Earth by sheer luck or happenstance. We got here because each time a

generation of Americans has faced a changing world, we have changed with it. We have not feared our future, we have shaped it.



"America does not stand still. We move forward. That is why I've said that as we emerge from this recession, we cannot return to the pre-crisis status quo. We cannot go back to an economy that was too dependent on bubbles and debt and financial speculation. We cannot accept economic growth that leaves the middle-class owing more and making less. We must build a new, stronger foundation for growth and prosperity – and that's exactly what we've been doing for the last sixteen months.

"It's a foundation based on investments in our people and their future. Investments in the skills and education we need to compete. Investments in a 21<sup>st</sup> century infrastructure for America – from high-speed railroads to high-speed internet. Investments in research and technology, like clean energy, that can lead to new jobs and new exports and new industries.

"This new foundation is also based on reforms that will make our economy stronger and our businesses more competitive – reforms that will make health care cheaper, our financial system more secure, and our government less burdened with debt."

**Memorial Day:** On Memorial Day, President Obama laid a wreath in honor of fallen soldiers at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elmwood, Illinois, and met with veterans and families who had come to honor fallen loved ones. That evening, the President spoke on the significance of Memorial Day at Andrews Air Force Base. In his remarks, the President honored the sacrifice of America's fallen heroes, saying:



"At its core, the nobility and the majesty of Memorial Day can be found in the story of ordinary Americans who become extraordinary for the most simple of reasons: They loved their country so deeply, so profoundly, that they were willing to give their lives to keep it safe and free.

"In another time, they might have led a life of comfort and ease. But a revolution needed to be won. Or a Union needed to be preserved. Or our harbor was bombed. Or our country was attacked on clear September morning. So they answered their country's call. They stepped forward. They raised their hand. They took an oath, just as all of you did. And they earned a title that would define them for the rest of their lives. A soldier. A sailor. An airman. A Marine. A Coast Guardsman...

"But had you asked any troop -- any of those troops in the past, they would have likely told you the same thing. Yes, we fought for freedom. Yes, we fought for that flag. But most of all, we fought for each other - to bring our buddies home; to keep our families safe. And that's what they did, to their last breath.

"This is what we honor today -- the lives they led, the service they rendered, the sacrifice that they've made for us. In this time of war, we pay special tribute to the thousands of Americans who have given their lives during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and who have earned their place among the greatest of generations."

**LGBT Pride Month:** June is Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month, an opportunity to celebrate the progress made by LGBT Americans and for LGBT Equality – and a chance to recommit to working for the changes still necessary to achieve full equality for LGBT Americans.

Over the last year and a half, President Obama and Democrats in Congress have made strides on behalf of LGBT Equality. They enacted hate crimes prevention legislation strengthening federal protections against crimes based on gender identity or sexual orientation. They took unprecedented steps to ensure that LGBT Americans would have the ability to visit or to be visited by a loved-one in the hospital, and to make medical decisions on their behalf. They included LGBT families in the Census for the first time in American history. And just yesterday, the President announced the extension of greater benefits to the same-sex partners of federal employees – offering benefits comparable to those available to opposite-sex spouses and families wherever possible under the law.

In recognition of Pride Month, DNC Chairman Tim Kaine joined LGBT Americans, their friends and families in celebrating that progress, and expressed his hope for more progress to come:

“As we enter June, I join Democrats across the country in celebrating Pride Month and the important strides LGBT Americans have made toward equality while also acknowledging the long way our country must still go to ensure equality for all Americans.

“The voices of LGBT Americans are an integral part of the fabric of our nation and of the Democratic Party, and they play a critical role in our efforts to move our country forward. President Obama and Democrats in Congress have heard the concerns of LGBT Americans and have worked hard over the past year to address barriers LGBT Americans continue to face. We know that at times the pace of change has not been as fast as some would like; however, while progress cannot be achieved overnight, the President and our Democratic leaders are committed to overcoming barriers to equality.”

Throughout Pride Month, the LGBT community is invited to share their thoughts, hopes, and suggestions with the Democratic Party through the YOUR VOICE MATTERS postcard campaign. OFA and State Party staff will be on hand at Pride events across the country asking attendees to fill out their own postcards, and supporters are also able to fill out a postcard online – in fact, several thousand individuals have already done so! We look forward to hearing from members of the LGBT Community this month, and every month. To fill out your own postcard, you can visit <http://my.democrats.org/page/content/yourvoice>.

### **Organizing for America**

**Preparing for Vote 2010 Kickoff:** This week, Organizing for America called on volunteers across the country to join in Vote 2010 kickoff events taking place this Saturday, June 5. The events will range from a phone bank in New Haven, Connecticut; to a canvass in Iowa City, Iowa; to an office opening in Charlotte, North Carolina. These events will bring together dedicated volunteers who will be working to bring the President’s supporters back to the polls for Democrats this fall. In a statement, OFA Director Mitch Stewart noted the importance of those efforts:



“OFA volunteers this election season will be making a special effort to reach the 15 million people who went to the polls for the first-time ever in 2008. Millions of 2008 first time voters have a special connection to President Obama and feel invested in his Presidency, and through our Vote 2010 work we will connect these voters with their local candidates whose success this fall is critical to the President’s continued success. Turning out just a small percentage of these voters above historical averages could make a crucial difference in close elections this fall.”

To take part in a Vote 2010 kickoff event, you can visit <http://my.barackobama.com/page/content/2010kickoffeventmap?source=VIC>.

### **Holding Republicans Accountable**

**Mark Kirk, Pinocchio:** This week, the DNC worked to hold the Republican Senate candidate in Illinois, Congressman Mark Kirk, accountable for the tale tales he’s been spinning about his military service. As the Washington Monthly reported Sunday:

“First, Kirk claimed to be ‘the only member of Congress to serve in Operation Iraqi Freedom.’ That turned out to be untrue -- Kirk served during the conflict, not in it. Second, Kirk claimed to ‘command the war room in the Pentagon,’ which also turned out to be untrue. Today, we learn of Kirk’s third strike. The Republican candidate for President Obama’s old Senate seat inaccurately claimed to have received the U.S. Navy’s Intelligence Officer of the Year award for service during NATO’s conflict with Serbia in the late 1990s.”

Since then, the DNC has been keeping the pressure on Kirk to sincerely apologize to voters for his ongoing series of untruths. While we’re waiting for that apology, you can read the whole story for yourself at [http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/archives/individual/2010\\_05/024032.php](http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/archives/individual/2010_05/024032.php).

### **Key Issues in the News and Background**

#### **Talking Points: The National Commission on the BP Oil Spill**

- From the beginning, President Obama has treated the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico with the seriousness a situation like this requires.
- He has devoted his attention to leading the response to the BP oil spill – a disaster that cost eleven people their lives and is bringing untold destruction to the ecosystem and economy of the Gulf Coast.
- And he will continue to do whatever it takes for as long as it takes to protect the Gulf Coast and those who have made it their home. This Administration is bringing every resource to bear, and employing every available technology to stop the oil spill, contain this environmental catastrophe, and clean up the damage.
- Right now, approximately 20,000 federal personnel are working to contain and clean up the oil in the area of the spill. And more than 17,000 members of the National Guard are at work in four states affected by the spill.
- The Administration is holding BP responsible for this disaster, and has ordered BP to pay every penny owed for the damage they have caused. Moving forward, the Administration will hold BP accountable for additional losses incurred by workers and families in affected areas.
- In short, this Administration is doing everything possible to help the men and women of the Gulf Coast whose lives – and livelihoods – have been turned upside down by the spill – from fishermen to restaurant owners to tourism professionals, and he is making sure they receive the support they need and the compensation they deserve.
- Even as the Administration works to mitigate the damage from this oil spill, they are also working hard to ensure such a disaster can never happen again.
- The President has made it clear – if our laws can't prevent future spills, we must change them. If our oversight processes don't result in tough enforcement, they must be changed. And if any laws were broken in the lead-up to this spill, those responsible must be brought to justice.
- The President knows that extensive reform may be necessary to prevent future disasters. And for that reason he signed an executive order establishing the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling.
- This week, the President met with the Commission's co-chairs, former Senator Bob Graham of Florida and former EPA Administrator Bill Reilly to talk about what the commission is doing to evaluate the causes of the current disaster and potential precautions that could prevent future catastrophes.
- In addition, the President is seeking better oversight of the oil industry and is working to end the close relationship between oil companies and the agency that regulates them. In keeping with that goal, the Administration has announced that the Minerals Management Service will be split into three parts to avoid conflicts of interest.
- The Administration has also implemented a six-month moratorium on deep water drilling for oil and gas in the Outer Continental Shelf and is working toward tough new operating standards for offshore energy companies, in keeping with the recommendations of the 30-day safety and environmental review.
- And the President is seeking Congressional passage of a bill that will provide critical resources that will enable today's response efforts and help America to better prepare for future oil spills.
- This tragedy underscores once more the necessity of working to meet America's energy needs as responsibly as possible. To that end, the President is calling on Democrats and Republicans to do everything they can to prevent an economic disaster like this one from ever repeating itself.

#### **Talking Points: Laying a New Economic Foundation**

- This week, President Obama traveled to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he delivered remarks on the American economy – where it is today, where it needs to be tomorrow, and how we can get it there.
- Since taking office, President Obama has made an incredible effort to renew and rebuild the American economy and to help workers, families, and businesses recover from one of the worst economic crises in American history. As a result, the American economy is growing again, Americans are going back to work, and our country is moving in the right direction.
- But many Americans are still feeling the effects of the economic fall-out – and too many are still searching for work or struggling to pay their bills. Today, the President renewed his commitment to those Americans. He made it clear he would not rest until every American feels the effects of the economic recovery.
- The President made clear that simply returning to the pre-recession status quo is not enough – we have to lay a new foundation for growth. And that is what this Administration has been doing for the last year and a half.
- The President pursued policies that sparked economic recovery and that now form the basis of a new economic foundation – one that will increase security and promote growth among America’s middle-class.
- From historic health insurance reforms that make care more affordable and more accessible, to educational reforms, to Wall Street reforms that increase accountability for banks and consumer protections for families, the President is working to address long-term barriers to middle-class success and economic growth.
- The new foundation this Administration is creating prioritizes investments in the American people and their future – from the education and infrastructure Americans need to compete globally to the research and technology that have made our nation a world economic leader.
- And the President’s new foundation also emphasizes critical reforms that will make the American economy stronger and more competitive by lowering the cost of health care, the government debt burden, and the risks of an unstable financial sector.
- In addition, the President is committed to addressing our national energy security – and he believes that we must embrace a clean energy future. He is seeking to ensure the private sector is invested in that future – and that means putting a price on carbon pollution.
- The House of Representatives has already passed legislation to that effect. And there is similar bipartisan comprehensive energy legislation in the Senate. The President will be working with Congress to get that legislation passed, and he will be taking the case for reform to the American people, because he believes the next generation should not be held hostage to 20<sup>th</sup> century energy sources.
- As the President noted in his remarks, the Administration has been laying the foundation for a brighter economic future without much help from Republicans. From recovery efforts to health insurance reform, to financial reform they have largely obstructed progress as much as possible.
- Republicans have stood with big banks and insurance companies to say no to tax cuts for small businesses, no to tax credits for college tuition, and no to clean energy investments.
- Some of the Republican opposition can be attributed to their belief in a limited government – the kind of government that would have no role to play in helping America to meet the challenges of the next century.
- But the President believes that government, though it can’t solve every problem, has a unique role to play in that future – standing up for American workers and families and investing in America’s future. That belief is in keeping with a long history of American governmental actions that have increased our country’s security and prosperity.
- Right now, our nation has to make a choice – we can go back to the failed economic policies of the past or we can move our country forward with decisions and investments that will create a stronger future.